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## MAY MEETING.

The Society held its stated monthly meeting this day, Thursday, 12th May, at eleven o'clock, A.M.; the President, Hon. ROBERT C. WINTHROP, in the chair.

Donations were announced from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts; the City of Boston; the Essex Institute; the New-England Loyal Publication Society; the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.; the Treasury Department of the United States; the Trustees of the Free Public Library of New Bedford; John Appleton, M.D.; George E. Chambers, Esq.; Mr. Deloraine P. Corey; Henry T. Drowne, Esq.; Mrs. Phebe Ann Hanaford; Clement H. Hill, Esq.; Mr. Samuel H. Smothers; M. Jules E. Souhard; Mr. S. Urbino; William Winthrop, Esq.; the publishers of the "Round Table;" and from Messrs. Brooks (W. G.), Robbins (C.), Webb, Winthrop, and Worcester, of the Society.

A letter was read from Rev. Mr. Hale, stating that he would be prevented by his numerous engagements from serving on the Standing Committee, to which he had been elected at the Annual Meeting. Whereupon the last Nominating Committee were requested to make a nomination to fill the vacancy occasioned by Mr. Hale's resignation.

The President read a letter from Mr. William P. Ellison, presenting, for the Society's acceptance, two coins, — one, a copper coin, supposed to have been issued by the Moors about the year 1000; the other, a Spanish gold coin of date 1743.

*Voted*, That the thanks of the Society be given to Mr. Ellison for this acceptable contribution to its cabinet.

The President presented to the Society the seal of the old Kennebec or Plymouth Land Company, the proprietors of lands on the Kennebec River. The device of the seal is an anchor and a codfish; above which, in the border, is a crown, with the motto, "*Nec frustra dedit rex.*"



The President, at the same time, exhibited a grant or deed of land from the Plymouth Company to Thomas L. Winthrop, dated 2d February, 1816, sealed with the above-described seal. The deed recites:—

The Patent granted by James I., 3d November, 1620, to the Council at Plymouth; and the "Charter and Deed of Affeofment, bearing date the 16th [13th?] day of January, A.D. 1629," to William Bradford and his associates, who subsequently assigned the tract on Kennebec River to the Colony of New Plymouth. On the 27th of October, 1661, the Colony, by their deed of bargain and sale of that date, for the consideration of the sum of £400 sterling, sold all the lands on that river to Antipas Boyes, Edward Tyng, Thomas Brattle, and John Winslow, their heirs and assigns for ever. The lands within the limits of their claim were confirmed to the proprietary by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, by their deed dated 18th February, 1789; and by them was the grant made to Thomas L. Winthrop, as above, in 1816.

The Hon. E. R. Hoar, of Concord, was elected a Resident Member.

The President read a letter from the Hon. James Lloyd, formerly a senator in Congress from Massachusetts, addressed to Samuel Breck, Esq., of Philadelphia,

explaining the origin of the motto on his carriage, "Please God I live, I'll go." It is here printed:—

*James Lloyd to Samuel Breck, of Philadelphia.*

AUG. 20, 1817.

MY DEAR SIR, — I notice, from your letter to Anna, that the motto on our carriage had attracted some attention, and become an object of speculation; that in the newspapers it had been called a riddle: and I also observe your wish to receive from me an explanation of it. From the propounder of a riddle, the solution, you know, is not fairly to be expected; in addition to which, the story will not only be long, but, being about a family connection, will be a prosing one, except to those immediately interested in it. I shall therefore feel no great inclination to give it, for the indulgence of an idle curiosity, to a common querist; but from you the inquiry is a natural one, and I feel bound from many motives to accede to your request, and to furnish the reply to it which follows.

My maternal great-grandfather (you will perceive what you are coming to), John Nelson, was a spirited and respectable inhabitant of Boston in the latter part of the seventeenth century. He was related to the Temple and Buckingham families in England: one of his daughters was the mother of the late Sir John Temple; a second married the father of Edward Dowse, Esq., of Dedham; and a third, my grandfather, Henry Lloyd, of the Manor "Lloyd's Neck," or "Queen's Village," in the State of New York.

In 1689, Mr. Nelson headed the Bostonians who surrounded the Government fort, turned the guns of a battery in the vicinity on it, and demanded the delivery thereof, and the surrender of Sir Edmund Andros, an arbitrary and unpopular royal governor, who had retired to it for security; but, thinking it safest to comply with the summons, he delivered up the fort, and was shortly after shipped from the colony for England. Soon after this, Mr. Nelson, being in Nova Scotia on mercantile business, was taken prisoner by the French or the Indian allies, and carried to Québec; where, obtaining intelligence of an intended and important expedition that was then preparing in Canada against the settlements on the Penobscot and Piscataqua River, at the very great risk of his life he endeavored to communicate the designs of the French to the Government of Massachusetts, and succeeded in the attempt by procuring two

Frenchmen to be the bearers of the information, who, after executing their commission, were retaken, carried to Canada, and punished as deserters. Mr. Nelson was carried out with them, in expectation of sharing the same fate. They were shot before his eyes: but he was remanded to prison, and soon after sent to France; and when on his passage, being still alive to the interests of his country, he again succeeded, by prevailing on a fellow-passenger, to carry information of a second project of the French to send twelve men-of-war and two thousand troops, which were then daily expected in Canada from Europe, to make a descent on the English colonies, and to sweep the coast from New Hampshire to Carolina.

On his arrival in France, he was confined in a small hole or dungeon for two years, without being permitted to see any one other than the person who fed him with his victuals through a grate. At the expiration of this time, a gentleman who had noticed these daily supplies had the curiosity to inquire who the prisoner was, and to speak to him, and offer his services. Mr. Nelson desired no other favor than the transmission of a letter from him to his friends in England; in consequence of which, a demand was soon after made for his exchange or release. He was then considered as a person of some importance, and was taken from his dungeon, and sent to the Bastille; where he remained until shortly before the termination of the war by the Peace of Ryswick, when he was allowed to go to England on his parole, and on security being given by a French gentlemen (tradition says in the penal sum of twenty thousand pounds) for his return. Soon after this, peace was concluded; and, the circumstances of his situation and conduct having excited some attention, he was questioned respecting them by King William, who also asked him if he intended going to France; observing, that, as the war was then ended, his doing it was unnecessary. Mr. Nelson replied, it was his intention to return; and mentioned the security that had been given for him. The king, with some warmth, repeated, that it was unnecessary, and forbade him to do it. "Will your majesty then pay my bonds?" was asked. "*No!*" said the king. Then Nelson replied, "Please God I live, I'll go!" and go he did. And as an evidence of respect for his memory, and admiration of his integrity and independence, one of his remote descendants — your present correspondent — has adopted his answer as a motto for the coat-of-arms on which those of his ancestor are quartered.

The sequel of the history of Mr. Nelson is neither a very grateful

nor a very uncommon one. After delivering himself up in France, he was discharged, and returned to England, where, Hutchinson in his "History of Massachusetts" says, he was brought into trouble for going back to France contrary to the king's order; but at length returned to his family, after ten or eleven years' absence. His private concerns, during this period, suffered extremely; nor did he receive any compensation for his disinterested and hazardous services and sufferings either from the royal or colonial governments. Probably his manliness and honesty prevented the one, and his dispositions and religious opinions at that day impeded the other; for the same author (Hutchinson, in whose words most of the preceding narrative is given) remarks, in reference to his conduct at the seizure of Sir Edmund Andros, that he was a young gentleman of good family, an enemy to the tyrannical government of Andros, but an Episcopalian in principle, and of a gay, free temper, which prevented his being allowed any share in the administration after it was settled, although he was at the head of the party that demanded the surrender of the fort. The same objections, probably, attached to him through life, as he was not of a temper to obviate them: and a similar fate, in some degree, has followed his memory; for although it has been honored and cherished by his posterity, and a shade of imputation never rested on it, yet two reverend editors or compilers of "Annals of New England" and "the Eminent Men of it," amid a host of others whom it would puzzle the genius of a Pope or a Churchill to damn to fame, even in verse that might otherwise be immortal, have not deemed his name worthy of their notice; I should hope, from ignorance of the preceding facts,—some of which, though not the principal part, are derived from family anecdotes,—rather than from the prevalence of the same ungracious and uncharitable feelings which actuated their predecessors.

*Voilà*, my friend, the *dénouement* you have asked of the mystery "of the motto." If the perusal carries with it any thing of penance, you have to remember, it is wholly of your own seeking; although I cannot say there is ordinarily much of comfort or of consolation to be derived from this reflection.

Yours affectionately, &c., &c.

[JAMES LLOYD.]

The Corresponding Secretary, Dr. Robbins, read letters of acceptance from J. Foster Kirk, Esq., and Erastus B. Bigelow, Esq.

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#### JUNE MEETING.

The stated monthly meeting of the Society was held this day, Thursday, June 9, at eleven o'clock, A.M., in the Dowse Library; the President, the Hon. ROBERT C. WINTHROP, in the chair.

The Librarian announced donations from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the American Philosophical Society, the Executive Committee of the American Antislavery Society, the Essex Institute, the Maine Historical Society, the New-England Loyal Publication Society, the Royal University of Norway, and the Suffolk Institute of Archæology and Natural History; from John Appleton, M.D.; William T. Coggeshall, Esq.; Mr. Andrew Cushing; Benjamin P. Johnson, Esq.; Rev. Rufus P. Stebbins, D.D.; Mr. Kent B. Stratford; Mr. William B. Trask; William W. Warren, Esq.; and from Messrs. Bartlet, Livermore, Metcalf, Robbins (C.), Sibley, Whitney, and Winthrop, of the Society.

The Corresponding Secretary, Dr. ROBBINS, read letters of acceptance from William C. Endicott, Esq., and from Hon. E. R. Hoar, who had been elected Resident Members. He also read a letter addressed to him from Mr. S. A. Washington, of Darnestown, Montgomery County, Md., offering for sale a seal with the coat-of-arms and motto of General Washington, which the writer